

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 204718

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ORIGIN PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 ERDA-05 ACDA-07 OMB-01 L-03

NSC-05 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 H-02 /064 R

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EUR/WE-MR. LIMPRECHT

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C-MR. HOPPER

OSD(ISA)-LCDR LANDEN (SUBS)

S/S- MR. ORTIZ

EUR/RPM-MR. HAWES

----- 028500

P R 172313Z AUG 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY

INFO CNO

CINCUSNAVEUR

CINCLANTFLT

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 204718

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MNUC, MARR, SP

SUBJECT: NPW VISITS TO SPAIN

REFS: A. STATE 085297 (DTG 082339Z APR 76)

B. CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK 122024Z AUG 76 (NOTAL)

C. MADRID 2484 (DTG 311412Z MAR 76)

1. SIGNIFICANT DIFFICULTY STILL IS BEING EXPERIENCED IN
OBTAINING ADEQUATE PORT ACCESS FOR THE NUCLEAR POWERED
TASK GROUP WHICH COMMENCED A SIX MONTH MED DEPLOYMENT IN
JULY (REF A). WITH SENATE RATIFICATION OF TREATY OF
FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION COMPLETED AND CORTES RATIFI-
CATION EXPECTED SOON, WE WISH TO PROCEED AS SOON AS
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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 204718

POSSIBLE IN OBTAINING GOS APPROVAL FOR REOPENING SPANISH

PORTS FOR NPW ACCESS. IF APPROPRIATE, FOLLOWING POINTS MAY BE DRAWN ON IN CONVERSATIONS WITH NAVY MINISTER DURING VISIT TO NIMITZ.

A. THE US NAVY IS INCREASINGLY CONVERTING TO NUCLEAR POWER WITH OVER A THIRD OF OUR COMBATANT FLEET, INCLUDING OUR MOST MODERN SHIPS (LIKE NIMITZ), NOW NUCLEAR POWERED.

B. THESE SHIPS ARE PARTICULARLY SUITED FOR OVERSEAS OPERATIONS IN AREAS SUCH AS THE MEDITERRANEAN WHERE DIRECT CONTACT WITH SOVIET NAVAL POWER IS A DAILY FACT OF LIFE.

FOR THESE HIGHLY CAPABLE SHIPS TO MAKE THE MAXIMUM CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEFENSE OF THE FREE WORLD, IT IS NECESSARY FOR THEM TO OBTAIN ACCESS TO PORTS, PARTICULARLY THOSE COUNTRIES WITH WHICH WE HAVE TREATIES INVOLVING MUTUAL DEFENSE INTERESTS.

C. U.S. NPWS OTHER THAN THOSE ASSIGNED TO THE FBM SQUADRON IN ROTA HAVE VISITED THE SPANISH PORTS OF BARCELONA AND PALMA IN PREVIOUS YEARS WITHOUT INCIDENT AND WITH A WARM WELCOME BY THE LOCAL POPULATION (LAST NON-ROTA VISIT WAS IN JULY 64 WHEN ENTERPRISE (CVN-65), LONG BEACH (CGN-9) AND BAINBRIDGE (CGN-25) VISITED BARCELONA AND PALMA DURING ROUND THE WORLD CRUISE). SO FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, CLOSING OF SPANISH PORTS TO THESE SHIPS WAS A POLICY DECISION OF THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT.

D. CONCERNING LIABILITY IN THE EVENT OF A NUCLEAR REACTOR ACCIDENT, PL 93-513 PROVIDES THAT THE VALIDITY (OR MERIT) OF ANY CLAIM ARISING OUT OF A NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP REACTOR INCIDENT WILL BE DECIDED BY THE UNITED STATES ON THE BASIS OF ABSOLUTE (NO FAULT) LIABILITY. THIS PRINCIPLE APPLIES EVEN THOUGH A COUNTRY MAY NOT HAVE IN EXISTENCE ANY RELEVANT LEGISLATION ON THE SUBJECT. THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THE LEGISLATION IS RECOGNIZED BY VIRTUE OF ITS INCORPORATION INTO THE TREATY (U.S. STATEMENT ON THE SETTLEMENT OF DAMAGE CLAIMS, NOTE 67 OF 24 JAN 1976).

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 STATE 204718

E. WITH THE COMPLETION OF FORMAL RATIFICATION OF OUR TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION NEARING COMPLETION AND BASED ON THE ABOVE POINTS, WE HOPE THAT SPANISH AUTHORITIES WILL PERMIT THE RESUMPTION OF U.S. NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIPS TO SPANISH PORTS TO FULLY IMPLEMENT THE SPIRIT AND OBJECTIVES OF OUR TREATY.

3. WE REALIZE SPANISH HAVE NOT RAISED SAFETY AND

ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF NPW OPERATIONS AS ISSUES.
HOWEVER, IF QUESTIONS ARISE, YOU MAY DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING:

A. THESE SHIPS HAVE ACHIEVED A REMARKABLE SAFETY RECORD, AMASSING TO DATE ACUMULATIVE TOTAL OF OVER 1400 YEARS OF REACTOR OPERATION WITHOUT AN ACCIDENT. WITH 136 NAVAL REACTORS IN OPERATION, U.S. NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIPS HAVE VISITED 38 COUNTRIES AND 97 FOREIGN PORTS IN COMPLETE SAFETY.

B. WITH REGARD TO ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS, THE TOTAL RADIOACTIVITY, LESS TRITIUM, DISCHARGED ANNUALLY TO ALL

PORTS AND HARBORS FROM THE MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED U.S. NPW, SUPPORTING TENDERS, NAVAL BASES AND SHIPYARDS WAS LESS THAN 0.0002 CURIE. TO PUT THIS VERY SMALL QUANTITY OF RADIOACTIVITY INTO PERSPECTIVE, IT IS LESS THAN THE QUANTITY OF NATURALLY OCCURRING RADIOACTIVITY IN THE VOLUME OF SALT WATER DISPLACED BY A SINGLE NUCLEAR POWERED SUBMARINE. IF ONE PERSON WERE ABLE TO DRINK THE ENTIRE AMOUNT OF RADIOACTIVITY DISCHARGED INTO ANY HARBOR IN 1974, HE WOULD NOT EXCEED THE ANNUAL RADIATION EXPOSURE PERMITTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON RADIOLOGICAL PROTECTION. AS SPANISH OFFICIALS ARE AWARE BY THEIR OWN ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING, U.S. NPW OPERATION IN ROTA FOR OVER 10 YEARS HAS NOT RESULTED IN ANY INCREASE IN GENERAL BACKGROUND RADIOACTIVITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT. THIS IS PROOF THAT THE PROCEDURES USED BY THE U.S. NAVY TO CONTROL RELEASES OF RADIOACTIVITY FROM U.S. NPW AND THEIR SUPPORT FACILITIES ARE EFFECTIVE IN PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 STATE 204718

4. REQUEST YOUR VIEWS ON HOW BEST TO FURTHER PROCEED WITH GOS ON THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE OF NPW ACCESS,CAPITALIZING ON THE UPCOMING VISIT BY THE KING AND NAVAL MINISTER TO NIMITZ.

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